

**REMARKS**

The Applicants have carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action of 17 May 2007. In response to this Office Action, the Applicants amend independent claims 1 and 16 so as to more clearly patentably distinguish these claims from the cited prior art. In addition, the specification is amended so as to provide word for word support of the revised claims. Further, Figure 1 is amended to clearly identify the opening 5 defined by the main frame 4 and bridged by the cross members 6, 8. Support for this amendment is found throughout the original specification and drawing figures.

The substantive rejection of the claims will be discussed in the subsections below.

**I. THE REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-9, 13, 14, 16-24, 28, 29, 31 AND 32 UNDER  
35 U.S.C. §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER U.S. PATENT 6,499,262 TO  
PINCHOT ET AL. IN VIEW OF U.S. PATENT 5,644,872 TO PERDUE**

As currently amended, independent claim 1 reads upon a ceiling panel comprising a main frame forming an outer periphery that defines an opening, at least two crossing members bridging that opening within the main frame and a veil facing material containing glass fibers wherein the facing material is adhered to the main frame and the crossing members.

As set forth in the Office Action, the primary reference to Pinchot et al "discloses a ceiling panel (12) having a main frame (17), at least two crossing members (57) that crosses the main frame (17) at two points (P1, P2) and aids in bridging the veil indirectly therewith, and a veil facing material (18) adhered to the main frame (17), column 4, lines 57-60."

As should be appreciated from reviewing Figure 3 and the text of the Pinchot et al reference at column 3, lines 36-44, the crossing members (57) are merely the legs of the angle bracket 56. These are assembled in the channels 41 of two frame side members in order to form a corner. The legs 57 clearly do not bridge any opening defined within the outer periphery of the main frame as set forth in claim 1 of the present application.

In addition, claim 1 of the present application clearly provides that the veil facing material is adhered to the crossing members. As noted above, "[a] leg 57 of each angle

bracket 56 is assembled in the channel 41 of the two frame side members 22 forming a corner" (see column 3, lines 38-40 of the Pinchot et al reference). As clearly illustrated in Figure 2 of the Pinchot et al reference, any leg 57 received in channel 41 is separated from the fabric or veil facing material 18 by the main bridge 31. Accordingly, the Pinchot et al reference also fails to disclose the structure of adhering the veil facing material to the crossing members as set forth in claim 1. In fact, that is not even possible with the structure disclosed in the Pinchot et al. reference.

Still further, the Examiner acknowledges in the Office Action that the primary reference to Pinchot et al fails to teach the concept of forming a ceiling panel facing from a glass fiber material.

Based on the above comments it is clear that the primary reference to Pinchot et al fails to teach or suggest the following explicit structural requirements set forth in claim 1:

- (a) the provision of crossing members that bridge an opening formed in the outer periphery of a main frame;
- (b) the adhering of a veil facing material to such crossing members; and
- (c) the forming of the ceiling panel facing from a glass fiber material.

The secondary reference to Perdue teaches that it is known in the art to form a ceiling panel having a glass fibrous fabric facing. Applicants, however, fail to appreciate where the secondary reference to Perdue addresses the two other shortcomings noted above with respect to the primary reference to Pinchot et al. Accordingly, even when considered in combination, the two cited references fail to teach or suggest the present invention as set forth in claim 1 which should therefore be formally allowed. Claims 2-9 and 13-15 which depend from claim 1 and are rejected on the same grounds are equally allowable for the same reasons.

Independent claim 16 reads on a method of making a ceiling panel including the steps of providing a main frame defining an opening, providing first and second crossing members within the main frame wherein each of the first and second crossing members bridges the opening in the main frame, providing a veil facing material containing glass fibers and affixing the facing material to the main frame and the first and second crossing members. Thus the method of claim 16 includes the requirements of providing crossing

members that bridge an opening in a main frame, a veil facing material containing glass fibers and affixing of that facing material to the main frame and the first and second crossing members. Thus, independent claim 16 includes each of the points that distinguish claim 1 from the cited references. Accordingly, claim 16 like claim 1 should be found to be allowed. Claims 17 – 24 and 28-32, which depend from claim 16 and are rejected on the same grounds are equally allowable for the same reasons.

### CONCLUSION

In summary, all of the pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art and should be formally allowed. Upon careful review and consideration it is believed that the Examiner will agree with this proposition. Accordingly, the early issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Applicants authorize any fees required pertaining to this response be charged to Deposit Account 50-0568.

Respectfully submitted,  
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